Political participation and political trust in Amsterdam: Civic communities and ethnic networks

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Abstract This article examines the political participation and political trust of four ethnic groups in Amsterdam. We explore, first, the degree to which Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans participate and the extent to which they trust the democratic institutions of the city. Second, we address how differences in participation and trust can be explained. For this we will turn to the civic community perspective which was reintroduced powerfully by Robert Putnam in his Making Democracy Work (Putnam 1993). In order to measure the civic community of ethnic groups we focus on ethnic organisations in Amsterdam and the links between them. Additionally, we will also report data on the use of mass media.

We conclude that there is a rank correlation between the degree of civic community of the various ethnic groups in Amsterdam and the levels of political participation and political trust in local - non-ethnic - political institutions. Civic engagement and social capital are the most powerful determinants of the quality of multicultural democracy.

Political participation is of particular importance for communitarian forms of democracy. The traditional republican view values political participation as part and parcel of a 'good life'. Citizens ought to participate in public affairs and political participation has an intrinsic moral value. Like the Athenians, communitarian democrats consider citizens that do not participate in public affairs 'not as unambitious but as useless' to use Pericles' famous expression. Yet political participation can also be defended without direct reference to such a moral conception of 'the good life'. In the rational choice model of democratic decision-making, political participation is valued as a means of overcoming the collective action dilemma by creating trust. Those who take an active part in public life tend to develop an attachment to it and more easily identify their interests with that of the polity. This identification promotes solidarity, and it follows that one way to encourage solidarity in the body politic is to have more people participate in public affairs (Dagger 1997: 115). We adhere to this latter rational choice model of participatory democracy.

The more elitist conceptions of democracy also require at least a certain amount of political participation, however. This becomes clear when we analyse the discussion about electoral participation. According to Anthony Downs' (1957) economic theory of democracy, abstention at the polls can be regarded as a sign of agreement with or indifference to the policies of the ruling government. Citizens apparently are satisfied with the current situation (or at least have no better alternative) and therefore see no reason to vote. In Downs' model, however, it is definitely not harmful for the stability of the democratic regime if those citizens who are content vote rather than abstain. A stronger argument for abstention states that it is not always desirable that all citizens vote because some people possess too little information about politics and policy issues and
voters may also behave irrationally. According to this model, which finds its origin in the seminal work of Schumpeter (1943), too much political participation may actually harm the political process and dilute the quality of the decisions. This would appear to be a clear-cut argument in favour of political apathy.

Yet, even in Schumpeter’s model of democracy a minimum level of electoral participation is required. First, if the citizen is seen as a consumer of policies the political elite requires a minimum amount of voting if they are to have an impression of the citizens’ preferences. As Richard Dagger points out: ‘If elections are merely opportunities for voters to advance their interests or register their preferences, low levels of voting make it difficult to discern those interests or preferences’ (Dagger 1997: 135). Even if we assume that most citizens are not very good at advancing their interests or that their preferences do not reflect their true interests, a certain level of electoral participation is still needed to maintain the legitimacy of the political institutions. Indeed the recent decrease in the turn-out in the elections for the European parliament has triggered a debate on the minimum level of voter turn-out necessary to speak of a ‘representative body’. Therefore, we may safely conclude that electoral participation is generally regarded as a positive contribution to the democratic process.

This also goes for a democracy in multicultural societies, that is, in societies where ethnic minorities add to the heterogeneity of political culture. Thus the autochthonous political elite has welcomed some form of political participation of migrants, for reasons of political integration as well as to ensure better information about the policy preferences of the ethnic groups. In some European countries this has even led to granting local level voting rights to foreign residents even though there were no substantial movements demanding such voting rights (Jacobs 1998). Ireland did so in 1963, Sweden in 1976, Denmark in 1981, Norway in 1982 and the Netherlands in 1985. In other countries advisory councils have been established in which representatives of various ethnic minorities participate and in which an attempt is made to register the preferences of ethnic groups. Multicultural democracy, then, is a democracy where ethnic minorities participate actively in the democratic process, thus providing the political elites with reliable information about their political preferences and the democratic institutions with popular legitimacy among the minority groups.

The political opportunity structure in the Netherlands appears to tally quite well with this conception of multicultural democracy. Historically, the traditional religious segmentation led to a system of pillarisation (Verzuiling), in which each religious group formed civic organisations of their own that were interconnected through personal links at the elite level. Based on these denominational ‘pillars’ a system of elite collaboration was established around 1917. Arend Lijphart (1968) has coined the concept consociational democracy for such democratic accommodation through elite collaboration. Even though Lijphart himself has suggested that consociational democracy requires a certain passivity and deference on the part of the rank and file, one might also argue that there cannot be a properly functioning consociational democracy without a strong civic community within each of the pillars. Indeed, the Dutch ‘polder model’, which is based on consensus by consultation, may well depend heavily on strong civic traditions that have been built up in the old consociational democracy.
Yet, there is a difference between consociational democracy and our conception of multicultural democracy. First, the former networks of Catholic, Protestant and socialist organisations that formed the pillars of consociational democracy cannot properly be called ethnic communities. Even though religion sometimes enters the concept of ethnicity, we would like to keep a distance between religion as a conception of transcendent values and ethnicity that is rooted in a conception of common descent but can take almost any content (Milikowski, unpublished). Second, while in Lijphart’s consociational democracy the different segments should ideally be roughly equal in size and political weight, in our multicultural democracy the ethnic communities are by definition minorities confronting a dominant ‘national’ majority.

If political participation may lead to legitimacy so it is with political trust. Even more so political participation, political trust gives legitimacy to political institutions. If ethnic voters do not have trust in political institutions the chances are that they will not vote and may find the exercise of political power by local and national authorities illegitimate. This is particularly likely if there are significant differences between the ethnic groups and the autochthonous population. Low trust is probably more harmful to democratic institutions than low participation and the two concepts are most certainly related. Yet the relation between political participation and political trust is a complex one. Most people who participate will also have trust in political institutions, even though this relation may be curvilinear for some groups: they participate very actively because they do not trust the institutions. This complex relation between political trust and political participation will not be addressed in the present article, but we will assume that the more ethnic groups vote and the more they trust the local political institutions, the higher the quality of multicultural democracy.

Amsterdam is home to the four ethnic groups whose political participation and political trust will now be investigated in more detail. We will explore the extent to which Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans participate in political processes, and the confidence with which they view the city’s democratic institutions. The results for the four groups differ considerably, and we will employ Robert Putnam’s civic community perspective to explore these differences (Putnam 1993).

Civic community is often invoked to explain political participation and trust in political institutions. The concept refers to voluntary associations of free citizens that are set up to pursue a common goal or a common interest. Already in 1840 Alexis de Tocqueville suggested a connection between civic organisations and the functioning of a democratic system. ‘Thus the most democratic country in the world now is that in which men have in our time carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the objects of common desires ...’. Tocqueville then asks himself: ‘Is that just an accident, or is there really some necessary connection between associations and equality?’ (Tocqueville 1990 [1840]: 275) His answer is affirmative, because contrary to aristocratic societies, where ‘[e]very rich and powerful citizen is in practice the head of a permanent and enforced association composed of all those whom he makes help in the execution of his designs’, in democratic societies ‘all the citizens are independent and weak’. ‘They would all therefore find themselves helpless if they did not learn to help each other voluntarily’ (Tocqueville 1990 [1840]: 275,
276). Were the citizens to leave the task of pursuing the common goals or common interests to the government this would force the government to 'spread its net ever wider'. The more government takes the place of associations, the more will individuals lose the idea of forming associations and need the government to come to their help. Tocqueville calls this 'a vicious circle' leaving no doubt about his opinion about such a democratic Leviathan.

But what then makes civil associations so crucial for democracy? In the first place, so it seems, it is the voluntary co-operation among citizens to enhance a common goal. Forced co-operation can do the same trick, as is shown in aristocratic societies. But in such societies citizens are not free and independent. Collaboration in aid of a common goal can also be enforced by the government, but that would, in the eyes of Tocqueville, lead to democratic despotism. In both cases vertical relations predominate, whereas in voluntary associations it is horizontal relations that predominate. In vertical networks the trust that is needed to collaborate in pursuit of a common endeavour is enforced and loyalties are focused narrowly on the principal, be it the 'lord', the 'godfather' or the 'government'. Such vertical relationships are based on dependency and not on equality. Hence trust in vertical relations is not based on self-reliance and is not 'generalised'. In a civic community, on the other hand, political trust is not focused upon individuals, but invested in institutions. Citizens voluntarily comply with collective rules and 'free riders' are sanctioned by all citizens rather than by the one in command. Political participation is self-induced and is not enforced.

We would expect a civic community to have many voluntary associations that are linked horizontally. Internally these associations also have horizontal linkages, so that trust and information can travel fast, both within and between associations. Vertical relations within and among associations also exist – because governance without vertical power relations is practically impossible – but these vertical relations do not predominate, as is the case in an aristocratic or feudal community. These dense networks create civic engagement and civic competence (Putnam 1993: 90) thus facilitating political participation and trust.

Some general information on the most important ethnic groups in the Netherlands will serve to contextualise our discussion on political participation and political trust in Amsterdam. Of key relevance are the history of migration to the Netherlands and the size of the various ethnic groups in the country as a whole and in Amsterdam. We then move on to present some figures on the degree of political participation and political trust of Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. Possible explanations for the various degrees of participation and trust are then explored. These include variables such as the educational, income, age and unemployment levels of the various groups. The main focus, however, will be on the civic community perspective and especially the networks of ethnic organisations in Amsterdam established through so-called 'interlocking directorates'. The conclusion draws out the article's main findings and presents some suggestions for further research.

**Ethnic groups in the Netherlands: cycles of migration and size**

In 1947 there were 104,000 people of foreign nationality in the Netherlands; 1.1 per cent of the total population. The vast majority of these people were of
European origin. Decolonisation and economic developments have determined migration patterns in the postwar period. Directly after World War II, between 1946 and 1972, the Netherlands had a labour surplus which resulted in the emigration of 481,000 Dutch citizens to Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. This emigration surplus lasted until the beginning of the 1960s, except for three short periods: 1945–1947, 1949–1951 and 1957. In these periods the Netherlands experienced a positive migration balance caused by immigration from the Dutch East Indies as a result of the decolonisation. In total, 300,000 repatriates and immigrants arrived in the Netherlands between 1946 and 1962 (Penninx et al. 1994: 7–9).

By the mid-1950s, the Dutch economy began to grow. This process led to a labour shortage in certain sectors of the economy, such as mining and industry. The system of ‘temporary guest workers’ was applied to fill vacancies in these sectors. Initially Italian workers were recruited, then labourers from Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Greece, Morocco, Yugoslavia and Tunisia. The number of ‘guest workers’ increased through spontaneous immigration from these countries, but immigration figures remained modest during the 1960s.

Another immigration wave took place before the independence of the former Dutch colony of Surinam (1974–1975) followed by a second peak after the decolonisation (1979–1980). This migration was not triggered by labour market considerations but by the decolonisation of Surinam. Before the independence of Surinam, the Surinamese were Dutch citizens and free to settle in the Netherlands. After the independence of Surinam in November 1975, the Surinamese had in principle become aliens and from 1980 onwards they became subject to restrictive admission policies. In the period 1960–1970 the immigrant population in the Netherlands doubled from 117,000 in 1960 to 235,000 in 1970. In the following decade the foreign population doubled again and reached 473,000 in 1980. The growth in 1980–1990 was smaller, 36 per cent (Penninx et al. 1994: 17). In 1995 there were 757,000 people with a foreign nationality in the Netherlands. If one takes naturalisation into account, the figure for the population of non-Dutch origin is higher (Heijs 1995: 206–11; Tesser et al. 1996: 20–23).

The age and gender composition of the respective immigrant groups changed in the course of time. In the case of early labour migrants from the Mediterranean countries, such as Turkey and Morocco, the vast majority was male. Among all foreign immigrants in 1965, 75 per cent were men, a similar proportion were men aged 20–39 years and 61 per cent immigrated alone, without family members. When, after 1974, family reunification became the main motivation for immigration, this pattern began to change in favour of females (Penninx 1979: 92–107). Thus, in 1985 only 51 per cent of the new immigrants from Turkey were men, 47 per cent from Morocco were men, and the percentage of men in the age group 20–39 years among the whole immigrant population declined to 37 per cent (Penninx et al. 1994: 33–36). The largest group of elderly people are found among the Surinamese, followed by Turkish people, then Moroccans and Antilleans.

Table 1 reports the size of four ethnic groups as on 1 January 1997 relative to the total population in the Netherlands. Like in most European countries minority ethnic groups in the Netherlands primarily live in the big cities. This becomes clear from a comparison of the national figures shown in Table 1 with, for example, the Amsterdam figures in Table 2. Of all Surinamese in the Netherlands, 24 per cent live in Amsterdam.
708 M. Fennema and J. Tillie

Table 1. Size of four ethnic groups in the Netherlands as on 1 January 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>287,219</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>279,958</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>232,991</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>95,435</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Dutch population</td>
<td>15,567,107</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBS 1997

For the Moroccans, Turks and Antilleans these figures are 21, 11 and 11 per cent respectively.

Of the total Amsterdam population 22.5 per cent are of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese or Antillean origin, whereas for the whole country the corresponding number is 5.2 per cent. Note that for the purposes of the present article, ethnic communities are defined as migrant groups that are formed on the basis of a national identity from the country of origin. These national identities are constructed outside their original context in a new society and this ‘transplantation’ of national identities makes them ‘ethnic’. A migrant in the Netherlands may feel him- or herself Antillean, Surinamese, Turkish or Moroccan, but he or she experiences this identity in Dutch society and from being dominant, this identity has become subordinate to another national identity. In a multicultural society there are conflicting loyalties between different and overlapping sets of national identities.

Political participation and political trust in Amsterdam.

The first results of a survey held in 1999 are presented below. Migrant groups were represented in such a way that reliable figures can be presented on the political participation and political trust of the main ethnic groups in Amsterdam. We also present data on the degree of political interest among the members of these groups. In terms of political participation, political trust and political interest, the results for the different groups show a strikingly similar rank order.

Table 2. Size of four ethnic groups in Amsterdam per as on 1 January 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>70,093</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>30,852</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>10,619</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Amsterdam population</td>
<td>715,063</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BSM 1996
Table 3. Voting turn-out at municipal elections in Amsterdam, 1994 and 1998 (in per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese/Antilleans</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal turn-out</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Tillie 1994; Tillie and Van Heelsum 1999; see also Tillie 1998

Political participation

Before we turn to the results of the opinion survey, we want to present figures on the turn-out at municipal elections. Table 3 provides this information for four ethnic groups in the Amsterdam municipal elections of 1994 and 1998 (the Surinamese and Antilleans were considered as one group in these studies).

From Table 3 it is clear that voting turn-out varies enormously not only between 1994 and 1998, but also among different groups. Yet the rank order remains the same: Turks vote more often than Moroccans and Moroccans vote more often than Surinamese and Antilleans. In 1994 the Turkish voters even had a higher turn-out than average. In 1998 there is a spectacular drop in voting turn-out, especially among the ethnic groups. Turn-out among Moroccans more than halves, Turkish voting decreases from 67 to 39 per cent and the Surinamese and Antillean vote decreases from 30 to 21 per cent. This drop is substantially more than the overall decrease in voters' turn-out. Yet, even in 1998 the turn-out of the Turkish voters is nearly average (39 as against 46). We have no explanation for this excessive drop in ethnic voting (yet), but we note that all groups are affected by it, with the Moroccan group showing the greatest decrease in turn-out.

Political participation is not limited to elections. People can participate in demonstrations, political associations etc. In order to get a broader view on the degree of political participation of the various ethnic groups in Amsterdam Table 4 presents the scores on a so-called 'political participation scale'. This scale consists of five items: (1) visiting meetings where matters concerning the neighbourhood one lives in are discussed; (2) active lobbying with respect to issues which refer to the neighbourhood or city; (3) participation in a so-called 'neighbourhood council'; (4) the probability of voting at local elections 'if they were to be held now'; (5) the likelihood that one will attend a public meeting concerning the neighbourhood if one is invited. The original scores on the scale (ranging from 0 to 5, where 5 is the highest degree of participation) were recoded into two values: 'low participation score' (original scores 0 and 1) and 'high participation score' (original scores 2 through 5).

From Table 4 we may conclude that Turks have the highest participation score: they score lowest on the low participation score (lower than the autochthonous citizens of Amsterdam). Moroccans follow with 23 per cent, which
Table 4. Degree of political participation in Amsterdam (in per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Low participation score</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1594</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

is comparable to the autochthonous group. Of all ethnic groups, Antilleans participate least in the public affairs of Amsterdam.

Political trust

In order to measure trust in political and governmental institutions a political distrust scale was constructed. This scale consists of the answers (agree, disagree) to the following three questions: (1) 'Municipal councillors do not care about people like me'; (2) 'Amsterdam public servants are only interested in rules and regulations'; (3) 'Political parties in Amsterdam are only interested in my vote, not in my opinion'. Note that the scale covers three important actors in the institutional arena: the municipal council, Amsterdam public servants and political parties. Table 5 presents the results.

Turks show the lowest degree of distrust (compared to the other ethnic groups a remarkable low score). Only 36 per cent of the Turkish population demonstrate high degrees of distrust (compared to 41 per cent of the Dutch citizens). The Turks are followed by the Moroccans and Surinamese. Antilleans have the highest degree of political distrust.

The degree of interest in Amsterdam public affairs will also be explored. First some questions were asked about passive and active involvement in the distribution of political information. Figures from Table 6 and 7 indicate interest in local politics as well as (potential) knowledge thereof. Table 8 provides brief data on political interest.

Table 6 provides the information that Turks most frequently read Amsterdam news in the newspaper, followed by Surinamese, Moroccans and Antilleans. This rank order differs from the rank order of political participation and political trust in that the position of the Moroccans and the Surinamese is reversed. However, when Amsterdam news is discussed at a party, Moroccans are more likely to join the conversation than are the Surinamese. When it comes to active

Table 5. Degree of political distrust in Amsterdam (in per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>High distrust score</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6. Political interest – Question 1 (in per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>If there is Amsterdam news in the newspaper, how often do you read this? (answer: always or often)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1575</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

interest in Amsterdam issues the rank order is as the same as with respect to political participation and political trust: Turks are most inclined to join a conversation on local issues, Antilleans are least inclined to do so. The same goes for interest in local politics. Compared to the other ethnic groups Turks show the greatest level of interest, followed by Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. Turks are in fact only slightly less interested in local politics that the autochthonous Amsterdam population, while the Antilleans are far less interested.

The overall findings confirm those reached above. Compared to other ethnic groups in Amsterdam, Turks show a higher turn-out rate at municipal elections, participate more in other forms of politics, have a greater trust in the local political and governmental institutions and are more interested in local news and in local politics. In this they are followed by Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. The rank order of ethnic groups with respect to the degree of electoral and political participation, trust and interest is exactly the same: first Turks, then Moroccans, then Surinamese and finally Antilleans. The only exception lies in the frequency of reading Amsterdam news in the newspaper, where the ranking of Surinamese and Moroccans is reversed. How can we explain this consistent difference between Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans?

Explaining political participation and trust: ethnic communities in Amsterdam

The civic community perspective.

Table 7. Political interest – Question 2 (in per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>If one is discussing Amsterdam news on a party, do you join the conversation, listen with interest or are you not interested? (answer: joins the conversation or listens with interest)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1509</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the introductory paragraphs we stated that the more citizens participate and the more they trust the democratic institutions, the higher the likelihood that the collective action dilemma will be solved. Collective endeavours are more likely to be successful if citizens trust each other and have confidence in local government. This is, of course, also true for members of ethnic groups. In that sense local democracy could be said to profit more from Turks than from Antilleans. This may also work the other way around, however. The results presented above suggest that in Amsterdam democracy works better for Turks than it does for Antilleans. How can we explain this difference? To answer this question we turn to the civic community perspective.

The work of Robert Putnam has demonstrated how important the civic culture is for the working of democracy. In his study of the regional councils in Italy, *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam has shown that civic culture can explain to a considerable extent the different political performances among the Italian regions. Rather than socioeconomic development – as is often assumed – it is the civic culture that seems to be responsible for a high performance of regional democracy in Italy. A balanced mix of vertical and horizontal social relations characterises civic society and creates an optimal situation for the development of trust, which is necessary for the pursuit of collective goods. The uncivic society lacks the horizontal linkages with the result that the political process depends solely on vertical social relations. Since in an uncivic society there are few relations between equals there is little balanced reciprocity and social obligations can only be enforced in hierarchical chains of relations. In the uncivic society patron-client relations predominate, there is a generalised lack of trust among citizens and the performance of regional government lags behind. Putnam has measured the level of civic behaviour in regions by the density of the local cultural and recreational associations, by newspaper circulation, by the referendum turn-out and by (lack of) preference voting. These different measurements have a high interrelation and thus form a robust ‘civic community index’.

When two citizens meet on the street in a civic region, both of them are likely to have seen a newspaper at home that day; when two people in a less civic region meet, probably neither of them has. More than half of the citizens in the civic regions have never cast a preference ballot in their lives; more than half of the voters in the less civic regions say they always have. Membership in sports clubs, cultural and recreational groups, community and social action organisations, educational and youth groups, and so on is roughly twice as common in the most civic regions as in the least civic regions. (Putnam 1993: 97-98)

What is true for the Italian regions, may also be true for a multicultural society. The civic culture of ethnic groups, that is their degree of civic community, will
most likely contribute to the working of democracy in a multicultural democracy.

To measure the civic community of ethnic groups we will focus on ethnic organisations in Amsterdam and the links among them. Additionally, we will also report data on mass communication. Note that, in contrast to Putnam, we do not consider political participation and political trust to be part of the concept of civic society (see also Lin 1999). Also in contrast to Putnam our dependent variables are not good governance and policy output but political participation, political trust and interest in local politics. Civic organisation among ethnic groups is conceived as the social capital of ethnic communities, not as their political engagement. This social capital is located in ethnic organisations and in those linkages between ethnic organisation that come into being when one person serves simultaneously on the governing board of two or more ethnic organisations. We call such inter-organisational linkages ‘interlocking directorates’. Interlocking directorates warrant further examination in relation to the civic community perspective.

Some critics of Putnam’s work have rightly pointed out that social trust does not necessarily spill over from one organisation to another (Levi 1996: 49). Indeed, trust may not be as easily transferable as Putnam seems to suggest. Social organisations not only create social capital but also create social boundaries. It may even be that ethnic organisations are founded because of lack of trust in other (ethnic) organisations. Ethnic boundaries may also be established because the receiving society does not allow migrants to build up social capital and does not give them a share in societal trust. Vice versa, once an ethnic organisation has been established, the ‘we-feeling’ is necessarily juxtaposed to the perception that others are different and hence not to be trusted. Distrust does not only exist between organisations that are ethnically different. Trust may also be lacking among organisations of the same ethnic group. Indeed, among organisations that are structurally equivalent, competition and distrust may be rampant, as is often demonstrated by sectarian left-wing organisations. However, the lack of trust between persons belonging to different (ethnic) organisations may at least partly be overcome by the mechanism of interlocking directorates. Elsewhere, one of the authors has argued that interlocking directorates are ‘halfway between market and hierarchy’ (Fennema 1982). Thus, interlocking directorates between banks and industry generally arise when the market does not create sufficient ‘trust’ between banks and industrial firms for the banks to engage in large-scale loans. In such circumstances a banker on the board of the industrial company may see to it that the money is well spent so that a sound return to the bank’s investment is guaranteed. Interlocking directorates increase trust between organisations by increasing communication between them. Even if these personal links do not produce control – and they normally do not – they nevertheless create trust, especially if all links together lead to dense networks of interlocking directorates. In these networks information about organisations can travel fast and corporate links then function as an early warning system against potential defectors and financial disasters.

By adding to Putnam’s civic community index the network measures based on interlocking directorates we add a proxy for the spill-over of trust among different organisations. We assume that the more links among the organisations of a specific ethnic community, the higher the social trust in that community and
the more likely it is that civic culture will develop. Ethnic organisations provide channels of communication and opportunities for joint action for members of an ethnic group. Interlocking directorates span groups of connected organisations (components) of which the network density can be calculated.\textsuperscript{7} The networks of ethnic organisations in Amsterdam are explored below.

\textit{Civic community: the inter-organisational structure of ethnic communities in Amsterdam}

Ethnic organisations can be studied as such (intra-organisational analysis), but also in connection with each other (inter-organisational analysis). By way of inter-organisational network analysis it is possible to develop an insight into the relations between ethnic organisations. How many and which organisations maintain relations with each other? Which organisations are central in the network of organisations? Are many organisations isolated from the network of ethnic organisations?

The focus here is on interlocking directorates, that is, individuals will be considered as links between organisations. Interlocking directorates will be interpreted primarily as channels of communication and co-ordination rather than channels of domination and control. We assume the ethnic organisations to have very little potential for direct positive or negative sanctions against other organisations since — unlike the local authorities — they do not distribute scarce resources that are unavailable from alternative suppliers. This assumption is based on the fact that most ethnic organisations are not, by themselves, able to mobilise large amounts of financial resources. This may, in some cases, be an unwarranted assumption because some organisations may be able to raise substantial amounts of money from their members or clientele. This can be the case with highly ideological organisations. It is said that the Kurdish PKK is able to raise substantial amounts of money, sometimes even by extortion ('revolutionary taxes'). Religious organisations are sometimes able to raise substantial sums of money from their congregation. Our assumption about the financial strength of the voluntary organisations may therefore not hold true for some revolutionary and religious organisations in the network, especially if they are organised on an international basis.

In general, however, we assume that ethnic non-profit organisations do not raise huge amounts of money. We also assume that few financial resources are channelled to the ethnic community organisations from outside. This assumption is also questioned. Braam and Ülger (1997), for example, suggest that political organisations in Turkey give logistic and ideological support to some Turkish organisations in the Netherlands. Bovenkerk and Yesilgöz (1998) suggest that drugs organisations play a role in the organisation of the Turkish community in the Netherlands. So far, however, little evidence has been produced in support of direct links between political organisations in Turkey and the Turkish community in the Netherlands, while the role of organised crime is still unclear. In future we plan to extend our network analysis to this area.

As a first step in studying the structure of ethnic communities in Amsterdam, Table 9 reports the number of organisations in relation to the size of the various ethnic communities. Information on the organisations was collected from vari-
Political participation in Amsterdam

Table 9. Organisational density of ethnic communities in Amsterdam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Number of persons</th>
<th>Number of voluntary organisations</th>
<th>Number of persons divided by number of organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antillean</td>
<td>10,619</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>30,852</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>70,093</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>409,638</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The migrants from the Dutch Indies and (later) Indonesia are not selected because they do not fall within the remit of the (local) government minority policies. The data on number of organisations have been collected by the IMES research group Migrant Networks in Amsterdam: Information and Mobilisation (Tillie and Fennema 1997; Alink et al. 1996; Berger et al. 1998a, Berger et al. 1998b)

ous sources including the Chamber of Commerce, experts on the specific ethnic groups, members of ethnic organisations, the municipality of Amsterdam.

Of the four ethnic groups reported, the Antillean community has the highest number of organisations per person (see the last column of Table 9: the lower the number, the more organisations per person). Per 247 Antillean inhabitants there is one organisation. In the Surinamese community, on the other hand, there is one organisation per 770 inhabitants. It remains to be seen to what extent this difference is explained by the size of the ethnic community. At first sight, there seems to be an inverse relation between size of the ethnic group and the number of ethnic organisations.

As already mentioned, it not just the number of associations but especially the number of links among these organisations that increases the communication and spill-over of trust among ethnic organisations, thus adding to the community's civic organisation. In the remainder of this article we will focus on the organisation of ethnic associations, thus providing some insight into the structure of a civic community. In interpreting the data, we will bear in mind the theoretical framework of Tocqueville and Putnam and assume that the horizontal linkages will contribute most to the civic organisations of these ethnic communities.

The main data on organisations and links appear in Table 10. The table gives a very rough indication of the structure of community organisation. Of the 106

Table 10. Ethnic organisations and their interlocking directorates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Organisations in network analysis</th>
<th>Isolated organisations</th>
<th>Interlocks in total network</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N As % of total</td>
<td>N As % of network</td>
<td>N As % of network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>89 84</td>
<td>41 46</td>
<td>62 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccan</td>
<td>82 77</td>
<td>32 39</td>
<td>45 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>70 77</td>
<td>50 71</td>
<td>12 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antillean</td>
<td>35 81</td>
<td>28 80</td>
<td>5 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Turkish organisations which we found through various sources, 89 were registered in the Chamber of Commerce which enabled us to get information on the board members. This amounted to 84 per cent of the total number of Turkish organisations. The similar numbers for the other ethnic groups are 77 per cent (Moroccan); 77 per cent (Surinamese) and 81 per cent (Antillean). The lack of information about the directors of certain organisations is, of course, partly due to inadequacies in the research. It is also, however, an expression of the stability and visibility of the organisations themselves. Registration at the Chamber of Commerce implies a minimal degree of professionalism and by definition makes the organisation public. The percentage of organisations which could not be included in the research because the members of the board of administration could not be found is in itself an indicator of organisational robustness of the ethnic community. On this indicator the Turkish community scored best while the Moroccan and Surinamese communities scored lowest.

The other indicators of civic organisation we use here are: (1) the number of isolated organisations relative to the total number of organisations in the network analysis (the larger the number of isolated organisations, the less civic the community); and (2) the number of links relative to the number of organisations in the network (the larger this number, the more civic the community).

With respect to the number of isolated organisations Moroccans score the highest, followed by the Turks. Relatively speaking, the Antillean community has the largest number of isolated organisations. With respect to the number of links, Turkish organisations show the largest number, followed by the Moroccan organisations. The Antillean community shows the smallest number of interlocking directorates. A more detailed analysis of the networks in the various ethnic communities follows.

**Turkish organisations in Amsterdam**

As evident from Tables 9 and 10, Amsterdam is home to about 106 Turkish organisations and in 89 cases it was possible to trace the board members (see Tillie and Fennema 1997). Of these 89 organisations, 41 are not connected with any other Turkish organisation through an interlocking directorate. The 48 connected organisations form eight different components. The largest component, made up of 29 organisations, is displayed in Figure 1.

A little over half the nodes in the component illustrated in Figure 1 (16 organisations marked with an asterisk) are religious organisations (a mosque or an organisation connected to a mosque). The remaining organisations are five 'general' ones (Turkse Raad Nederland, THW, TDM, HTDB and DIDF/DVA); one sporting club (F.C. Türkiyem Spor); two business organisations (TINOS and STINO); two youth organisations (ATJv, Alternatif) and two academic organisations (Research Center Iraqi–Turkmenian Culture, Dutch–Turkish Academic Society). The Amsterdam Centrum Buitenlanders (a heavily subsidised facilitation organisation) also appears to fit into this component. We consider this component to be Islamic/social-cultural. The component consists of four interconnected cliques. The first clique is grouped around Hilal (religious, extreme nationalist), the second clique around the TDM (the Turkish advisory council, established by the municipality), the third clique around TINOS (which has as its goal the orientation of Turks toward the agricultural sector) and the fourth cluster around the Turkse Raad Nederland – the Turkish Council of the
Organisations:

- Soyad*
- F.C. Türkiyem Spor
- Yılmaz*
- Ulus Camii/Grote Moskee*
- Türkse Raad Nederland
- Türkse Humanitaire Hulp Nederland*
- Türkse Federatie Nederland*
- Türks Volksburo Osdorp*
- Tükm*
- TISBO*
- TINOS
- THW
- TDM
- TDJV*
- STNO
- STISCCAN*

SICA*
Onderzoekscenrum Iraaks-Turkmeense Cultuur
Nederlands-Turks Academisch Genootschap
HTDB
Hilal*
Haci Bayram Osdorp ISN*
Fatih moskee ISN*
Elif*
DIDF/DVA
ATS*
Amsterdamse Turkse Jongeren
Amsterdams Centrum Buitenlanders
Alternatif

Netherlands – (extreme nationalist). Regarding the connectivity of the network, especially the cutpoints are of interest. These are: ATS and Soyad (cutpoints between the Hilal and the TDM clique); Fatih and STNO (cutpoints between the TINOS cluster and the TDM cluster) and the Dutch-Turkish Academic Society (cutpoint between TDM cluster and the Turkish Council of the Netherlands cluster).

We measure the global centrality of the organisation by mean distance to all other organisations in the component. In terms of mean distance the TDM (mean distance 2.21), Soyad (2.54), Fatih (2.89) and ATS (2.93) are the most central
organisations. For TDM local and global centrality overlap, but for Soyad, Fatih and ATS this is not the case. All three of them are cutpoints in the component.

Moroccan, Surinamese, and Antillean organisations

The other ethnic communities can be analysed along similar lines. In general one can say that the Moroccan community is relatively well organised. Its biggest component is visualised in Figure 2.

The component portrayed in Figure 2 consists of two connected clusters. One cluster has the Council of Mosques as its central node, the other is organised around the Moroccan Educational Board (MARVO). The mosque El Hijra is a cutpoint in the component. Without this mosque the two clusters would not have been connected. Nearly all organisations within the component are religious organisations. A second component of 7 Moroccan organisations is represented in Figure 3.

The component in Figure 3 contains only left-wing and secular organisations and has a particular structure. Apart from the above-mentioned ACB, a government-sponsored facilitating organisation and not a Moroccan organisation in the
strict sense of the word), these organisations form a string, in which each
organisation, except the ‘end nodes’ of the string, is a cutpoint. Communication
in such string networks is not very efficient.

The Surinamese community is very poorly organised, with the biggest compo-
ponent comprising four organisations, two of which have re-migration to Surinam
in their mission statement while the other two are evangelical. The total number
of organisational links is also small (12). This is all the more surprising because
of the large number of Surinamese in Amsterdam and the relatively long
migration history. Finally, the Antillean community fared little better in terms of
organisational networks. The lack of personal links is the cause of fragmentation
among Surinamese and Antillean communities. Indeed, although the Antillean
community has a very high organisational density (the relative number of volun-
tary organisations is high) the connectivity of the community structure is
very low. This points to a weak civic community.

Table 11 summarises the results with respect to the network indicators of civic
community used in this article. The number in the cells reflect the rank-order of
the various ethnic communities in relation to the specific indicator (that is,
‘1’ = ‘highest civic community’; ‘4’ = ‘lowest civic community’).

To calculate a civic community index we have weighted the network indica-
tors that refer to the relative number of organisations as ‘1’ (the first two) and
the (remaining) indicators that refer to their links as ‘2’. This was done to
emphasise the importance of the links in our civic community perspective. These
scores are summarised in the last column of Table 11. From these scores we can
conclude that, according to the network indicators, the Turkish community in
Amsterdam is the most 'civic', followed by the Moroccans. The Antillean and Surinamese communities show the smallest degree of civic community.

The above has examined organisational indicators of a civic community. Two additional indicators will now be discussed, namely: watching of the special television channel for migrants and reading 'ethnic' newspapers.

**Additional indicators of ethnic civic community: use of mass communication**

Reading or watching the local news is an intrinsic part of life in the civic community. As Tocqueville has already noted:

> When no firm and lasting ties any longer unite men, it is impossible to obtain the co-operation of any great number of them unless you can persuade every man whose help is required that he serves his private interests by voluntarily uniting his efforts to those of all the others. That cannot be done habitually and conveniently without the help of a newspaper. Only a newspaper can put the same thought at the same time before a thousand readers.... So hardly any democratic association can carry on without a newspaper. (quoted in Putnam 1993: 92)

It is therefore appropriate to add to our civic community index two indicators that refer to the use of mass communication. The first relates to the frequency with which the interviewee watches the special Amsterdam television channel for migrants (*Migranten TV*). The programmes of *Migranten TV* are targeted at the main ethnic groups in Amsterdam and address a broad range of subjects of special interest to the various ethnic communities. The channel broadcasts special programmes for Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. We assume that the more one watches *Migranten TV*, the more one is engaged in the civic life of the ethnic community. Table 12 summarises the frequency with which the four ethnic groups under discussion in this article watch this television channel. The table makes clear that Surinamese watch *Migranten TV* most frequently, followed by the Moroccans, the Turks and finally the Antilleans of which 22 per cent watch the programme on a regular basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Percentage regular watchers</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further indicator of ethnic civic engagement is the extent to which one reads an 'ethnic newspaper'. We assume that the more one is interested in the own ethnic community, the more one will read newspapers from the country of origin. Thus, civic engagement in the Turkish community means reading Turkish newspapers, civic engagement in the Moroccan community means reading Moroccan newspapers etc. In Amsterdam it is relatively easy to buy Turkish, Moroccan or Surinamese newspapers. It is to our knowledge not possible to buy an Antillean newspaper. The non-existence of Antillean newspapers in Amsterdam should not necessarily be interpreted as a sign of a lack of interest, but may
rather be a consequence of the small size of the Antillean community (see Table 2). If a viable market was judged to exist, such newspapers would presumably be available. Antilleans by implication score the lowest on this indicator of civic community. Table 13 presents the figures for Turks, Moroccan and Surinamese.

Of the Turks in Amsterdam 51 per cent read a Turkish newspaper. For the Moroccans this number is 15 per cent, while of all the Surinamese in Amsterdam, only 4 per cent read a Surinamese newspaper. For our civic community score this means that Turks score the highest, followed by Moroccans, Surinamese and finally Antilleans.

Table 14 summarises the 'final' civic community score. This score is calculated by summing the network indicator score, the 'television score' and the 'newspaper score'. Our conclusion is that Turks show the highest degree of civic community (total score 13), followed by Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. The Antilleans demonstrate the lowest sense of ethnic and civic engagement. Given this rank order of civic engagement and the various degrees of political participation and political trust (where Turks also scored highest, followed by Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans) our argument is now straightforward. Political participation and political trust is explained by the degree of civic engagement. The more an ethnic group is engaged in the own community's affairs the more it participates in local politics and the more it trusts the political institutions. This is in line with the results Putnam found with respect to the Italian regions. Civic (ethnic) community creates political participation and political trust. It also coincides with recent research on electoral participation in which it is assumed that higher degrees of social activity will increase political activity, including voting (van Egmond, de Graaf and van der Eijck 1998). The critical reader may argue that although there is a strong correlation between civic engagement and political participation and trust, other characteristics of the ethnic groups might explain the political participation and political trust displayed by their members. This might include respective income levels and unemployment. In relation to the latter one would expect higher income groups to participate more in politics and the unemployed to participate less).

Table 14. 'final' civic community score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>'network score'</th>
<th>'television score'</th>
<th>'newspaper score'</th>
<th>'final' civic community score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15. Median income and education level; mean age and level of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Median income level</th>
<th>Median education level</th>
<th>Mean age</th>
<th>Percentage unemployed*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>Between fl. 2100 – 2750</td>
<td>low/middle</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>Between fl. 1400 – 2100</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>Between fl. 1400 – 2100</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>Between fl. 1400 – 2100</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BSM 1997

Alternative explanations: income, education, age and unemployment

Alternative explanations for the varying degrees of political participation and trust among ethnic groups in Amsterdam warrant at least a brief discussion. Table 15 reports the relevant data on median income and education levels, mean age levels and levels of unemployment for the four ethnic groups studied.

The conclusion suggested by Table 15 must be that none of the included measures – median income level, median education level, mean age, and level of unemployment – can fully explain the various degrees of political participation and trust. With respect to the median income level Turks come first, they are followed by Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans who all are in the same income category. The same pattern is observable for median education levels with Turks in first place, followed by Surinamese, Moroccans and Antilleans. With respect to the mean age Turks are youngest, followed by Moroccans, Antilleans and Surinamese. As far as Turks and Moroccans are concerned, the age scores correspond with those of civic community scores. However the order of Antilleans and Surinamese is reversed in this respect. Finally, the rank order with respect to the unemployment levels is Turks, Antilleans, Surinamese and Moroccans which (except for the Turks) contrasts with the degree of political participation and trust. Only for the Turks does the ranking according to income, age education and unemployment correspond with that of political participation, trust and interest. Income and education levels do not discriminate between the remaining groups, while for age and employment the rank correlation tends to be reversed. The degree of political participation and trust can not be explained (or only partially so) by income, education, age or levels of unemployment. Civic engagement is the most powerful determinant of the quality of multicultural democracy.

Conclusion

We have now established a rank correlation between the degree of civic community of the various ethnic groups in Amsterdam and the levels of political participation and political trust in local – non-ethnic – political institutions. This is a very important conclusion, especially because many Dutch policy-makers do not consider all the organisations that make up these ethnic communities as being particularly ‘civic’. Muslim organisations, for example, are at best considered non-civic, and the fundamentalist ones are considered as authoritarian, if not anti-democratic. Our argument here is not so much that these policymakers are all mistaken in their judgements about some of the ethnic organisa-
Political participation in Amsterdam

723

tions. Rather, our research seems to suggest that such organisations do not necessarily have a negative impact on the functioning of local democracy. We can also formulate our tentative conclusion in a more provocative way. To have undemocratic ethnic organisations is better for the democratic process than to have no organisations at all. The more so if these ethnic organisations are heavily linked. This conclusion may be somewhat contentious. How can authoritarian organisations be schools of democracy? The answer is simply that even in authoritarian organisations people learn to solve the dilemmas inherent in collective action. Authoritarian organisations also create social capital at the individual as well as at the group level and this enables people to attain social goals that would be unattainable without a collective effort.

The existence of authoritarian or even extremist organisations may lead to political participation, but their existence does not necessarily lead to political trust. As the PKK in Germany has shown, it may well be possible to engage in collective action without supporting local or national democratic institutions. In Amsterdam, however, ethnic violence has been extremely rare even though Amsterdam also has a fair amount of fundamentalist and extreme nationalist ethnic organisations. We assume that this is due to the political opportunity structure in Amsterdam. The first difference with the German situation is that the foreign residents have had voting rights since 1985. Second, the policies of the local government has been much more open and receptive to the demands of ethnic organisations than has been the case in most German cities. Dutch ‘minority policy’ has, until recently, been aimed at supporting ethnic culture and organisation of the migrants as a means of integration into Dutch society. Third, the Dutch tradition of consociationalism has created a political culture in which the existence of group demands can be more easily integrated in the democratic process. As stated in the introductory paragraphs, our emphasis on the importance of ethnic organisations and interlocking directorates for a viable multicultural democracy relates to an older debate about ‘pillarisation’ in Dutch society. This segmentation between congregational communities has led to what Liiphart has labelled consociational democracy. National identity in consociational democracy is necessarily ambiguous and flexible because it has to give discursive space to the politics of accommodation among different identity groups. Therefore, and this brings us to our final point, the discursive opportunity structure in a consociational democracy may be more favourable to ethnic minorities (for a defence of associational democracy in a multicultural context, see Vertovec 1999; for a different point of view, see de Beus 1997: 35).

It is quite possible that under such conditions a learning process has taken place through which the political integration of ethnic groups has been facilitated. One example is the zeal with which all political parties, including the conservative VVD, has pursued the possibility of supporting a training programme for Imams in the Netherlands. This zeal is partly explained by the wish to prevent Imams from Turkey or Morocco from interfering in Dutch politics. Yet, by suggesting this solution the Dutch political parties reinforce the political trust of Muslim community leaders in Dutch democratic institutions and in Dutch political elites (see Bolkestein 1998). Once this trust has been established it may be relatively easily transferable, i.e. the process of political participation becomes self-sustaining.

All this, however, does not explain why some ethnic groups have seized the (social, political and discursive) opportunities in Dutch society to build strong
civic communities, while others have been unable – or unwilling – to do so. It is tempting to explain these differences by the political and civic culture of the country of origin. Indeed, it may well be that Turkish society is better organised than Antillean society, which, in turn, is reflected in the civic organisation of Turks and Antilleans in Amsterdam. An indication that this may indeed be the case is found in the study of Cadat and Fennema (1998) which showed that migrant politicians tend to have a family background in the country of origin that appears to provide them with the social capital to succeed in Amsterdam politics. This finding, however, refers to individual social capital and does not say much about the social capital at the level of the polity. This calls for new research, because the recent emphasis on the politics of effecting civil society and democratic transitions in Third World countries has as yet not led to much comparative work (Biekart 1999). Another way to deal with this problem is to compare the development of civic community among the same ethnic groups in different European cities.10

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1 The causal relation may also not be reversed: it is quite likely that people with a high level of political deference combine a high level of political trust with a low level of political participation.
2 This part of the paper is based on the work of Kral and Zorlu (1998).
3 The total number of the population of non-Dutch origin includes another main category of immigrants, refugees, who arrived in the Netherlands from Hungary (1956), Portugal (1960s) and Czechoslovakia, followed in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s by Ugandans, Chileans, Uruguayans, Argentinians, Ethiopians and Eritreans, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Surinamese, Iranians, Turkish Christians, Kurds, Poles, Iraqis, Bosnians and others (BSM-Gemeente Amsterdam 1996; O+S 1994; Penninx et al. 1994).
4 Data were collected in January and February 1999. We want to thank the municipality of Amsterdam and especially Jennifer Tjin A. Ton for allowing us to use these data. See also Bosveld and Slot (1999).
5 The five items form a so-called Mokken-scale. The difficulty and H-coefficients are as follows: item 1 (mean = .18; H = .31); item 2 (.19, .45); item 3 (.59, .41); item 4 (.83, .35) and item 5 (.27, .51). The H-coefficient of the total scale is .40.
6 Mokken-scale values (mean and Hi-coefficient) are: item 1 (.49, .41); item 2 (.64, .40); item 3 (.68, .44). H-value = .42.
7 In each component we can further calculate the ‘centrality’ and ‘betweenness’ of the organisations involved (Wasserman and Faust 1995). Centrality is defined here as local centrality: the number of adjacent ethnic organisations is seen as a centrality index. Betweenness is defined as the number of times an organisation is a node on the shortest path between two other organisations in the component. To measure civic community we can use a number of network measures that have been developed in graph theory. Network density is the number of connected points as a fraction of the total number of possible ties and mean distance is the average distance between all pairs in a connected sub-network or component. Both measures give an indication of the cohesion of the network. High density indicates a high level of cohesion, a low average distance between all pairs in a connected sub-network indicates a strong cohesion in that sub-network.
(Note that mean distance can only be calculated for connected organisations, since the distance between unconnected points is not defined.)

Apart from these measures, we can calculate the number of isolated organisations and the number of connected sub-networks or components. Freeman (1979) has developed a more sophisticated measurement of the extent to which the network is not divided into separate components. Borgatti and Everett (1996) have developed a similar measurement of core-periphery structure. Finally, Marsden (1988) has developed a measurement of homophily that is the extent to which organisations are linked to other organisations with a similar identity or mission statement. As evident from Figure 1, there are many ties among Turkish organisations that all have a similar fundamentalist religious orientation. A high degree of homophilic cliques in a network presumably decreases the social capital of the network because ideas cannot circulate easily beyond these homophilic cliques. Thus, we can analyse specific network characteristics of the ethnic communities as well as the structural position of some key organisations within that network. In other words, the network can be analysed both at the system level and at the actor level (see Borgatti et al. 1998 for a very useful overview of the different perspectives, network measures and their indication of social capital).

For an extensive discussion on the method used to collect information on the ethnic organisations refer to Alink et al. 1998. Note that while we endeavour to include as full information as possible, we do not pretend to provide an exhaustive overview of the number of organisations in existence.

If cutpoint is removed the network falls apart into two or more components or isolated points.

We intend to do that in the framework of the UNESCO-MOST research group on Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship (MPMC).

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